



# SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

## SUMMIT COUNTY PROSECUTOR

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## **Akron Man Sentenced to Life in Prison for Shooting Death of 4-Year-Old Girl**

AKRON, Ohio (Wednesday, October 10, 2018) – Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that Summit County Common Pleas Court Judge Christine Croce sentenced Darnell Bitting, 32 of Georgia Street in Akron, to life in prison for the shooting death of 4-year-old Janaya Swain. Bitting will be eligible for parole after serving 56 ½ years.

On Friday, October 5, 2018 a Summit County jury found Bitting guilty of the following charges:

- Two counts of Murder with Firearm Specifications – special felonies
- Six counts of Felonious Assault with Firearm Specifications – felonies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree

“This tragedy will leave its mark for years to come. Four-year-old Janaya was full of life and always there to help a friend. She will be sorely missed,” said Prosecutor Walsh. “We are pleased to know the man responsible for her death will never again have the chance to hurt an innocent life. Our hope is that today’s sentence brings Janaya’s family some peace.”

At around 10:30pm on February 16, 2018, De’Azha Swain pulled up to a home on Mercer Avenue in Akron to retrieve some personal items. Four young girls, ages two, four, six, and seven, and their grandmother were also inside the vehicle. De’Azha got into an argument with Darnell Bitting, who was inside the home at the time. Bitting came out of the home with an AK-47 and fired the weapon. A shot struck and killed four-year-old Janaya Swain.